

# IDW<sup>®</sup> TRANSFORMERS

## COMBINER HUNTERS

MAIRGHREAD SCOTT  
SARA  
PITRE-DUROCHER  
YAMAISHI



CWC  
2015



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MAIRGHEAD SCOTT  
SARA  
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YAMAISHI

SEA OF RUST

IN JUST 5 HOURS

PAN CYBERTRONIAN SPACEWAYS

THE GALAXY'S MOST EXPERIENCED FASTER THAN LIGHT SPACELINE

JMB2015



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# COMBINER HUNTERS

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Editor: JOHN BARBER



Special thanks to Hasbro's Clint Chapman, Heather Hopkins, Jerry Jivoin, Joshua Lamb, Ed Lane, Mark Weber, Sarah Carroll, and Michael Kelly for their invaluable assistance.



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IDW founded by Ted Adams, Alex Garner, Kira Opreko, and Robbie Robbins

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CHROMIA!  
FINALLY!

HEY, WHAT'S  
WITH THE  
CITYSPEAKER  
FACE-PAINT?



THE MISTRESS  
OF FLAME DECLARED  
IT AN OFFICIAL HOLIDAY  
TO CELEBRATE THE  
UNIFICATION AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN CAMINUS  
AND CYBERTRON.



NOT ONLY DID  
I HAVE TO PUT ON  
FULL DRESS MAKEUP,  
I HAD TO WATCH  
THAT PREENING IDIOT  
STARGSCREAM STRUT  
AROUND LIKE HE  
JUST INVENTED  
ENERGON.

ERRGH! WHY  
DOES THIS  
STUFF NEVER  
COME OFF?!

I THINK IT  
LOOKS NICE.



SHUT  
UP!

SORRY...  
WINDBLADE'S THE  
ONLY ONE WHO CAN  
ACTUALLY PULL OFF  
THIS SCRAP.



WELL, I'M OFF TO  
MACCADDAM'S.

HAVE FUN MAKING  
SURE GIGGLES  
OVER THERE DOESN'T  
STEAL THE ENIGMA  
AND START AN  
INTERPLANETARY  
WAR OR NOTHIN'.

LAST THING  
WE NEED IS  
SOMEBODY  
MAKIN' MORE  
COMBINERS  
WITH IT.

YEAH, YEAH.  
DON'T TRUST  
ANYONE... BLAH,  
BLAH, BLAH.



YOU GOT  
THOUGHTS  
ABOUT MY  
SITTING-  
BOX?

NO. THE  
CHOSEN ONE  
TOLD ME TO  
STAND AT  
ATTENTION.

THEN EYES  
FORWARD,  
BADGELESS.

LET'S JUST  
GET THROUGH  
THE NEXT EIGHT  
HOURS IN PEACE  
AND QUIET.

URRGH!

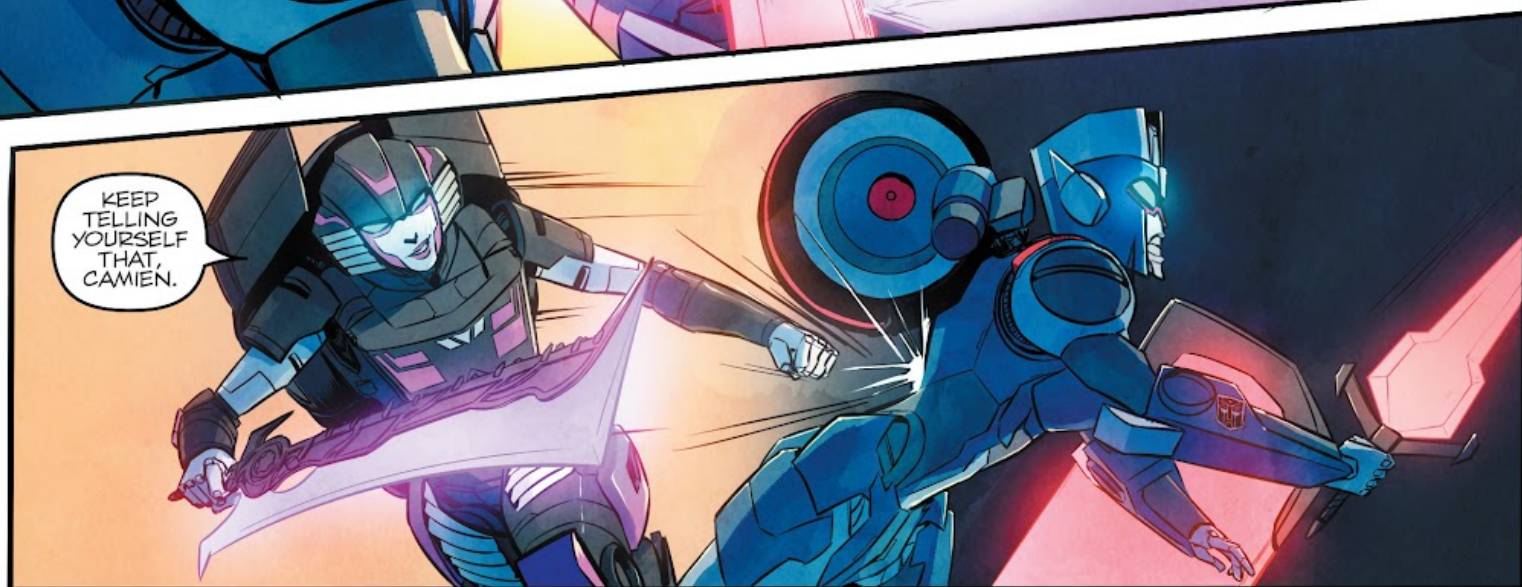
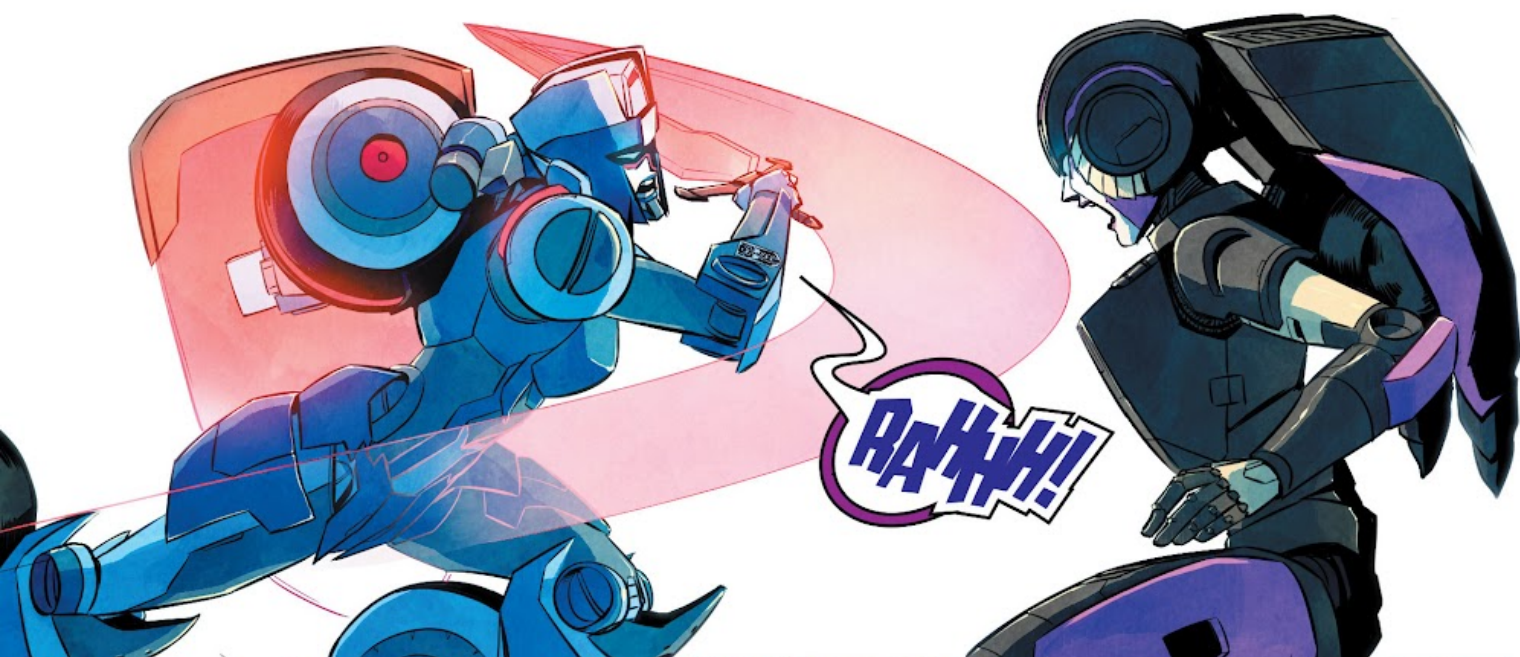
I COULDN'T  
AGREE MORE.  
LET'S KEEP  
THIS PEACEFUL,  
CHROMIA.

I'M JUST  
HERE FOR THE  
ENIGMA OF  
COMBINATION.

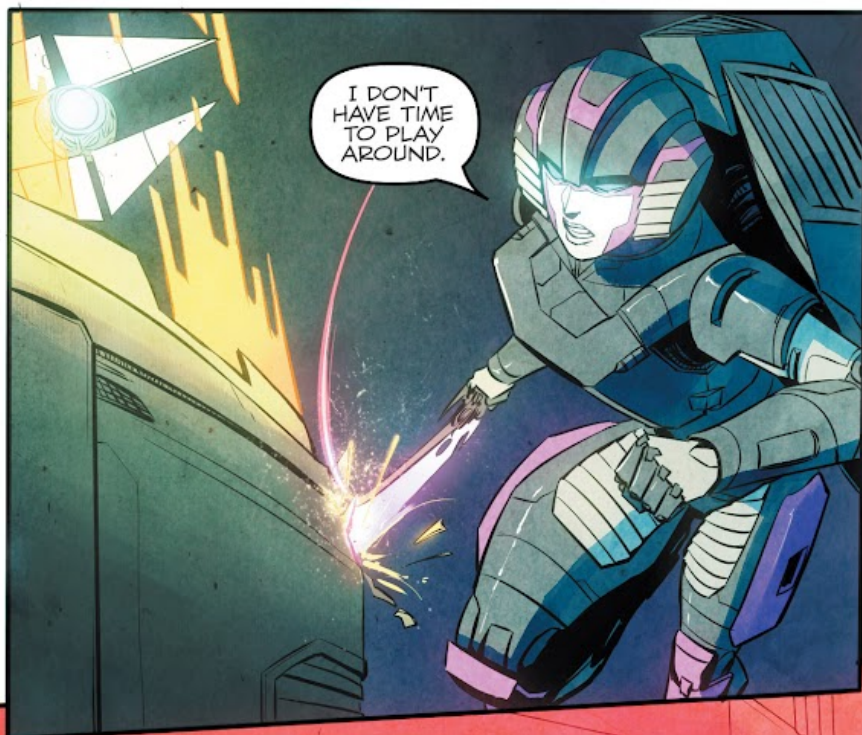
...UGHHH...

## An Uneventful Night









I DON'T  
HAVE TIME  
TO PLAY  
AROUND.



STOP!



**RAH!**

FEEL FREE  
TO GIVE UP  
ANY TIME.



WINDBLADE!  
ARCEE'S  
MAKING OFF  
WITH THE  
ENIGMA.

WHAT?!



I'M IN  
PURSUIT!

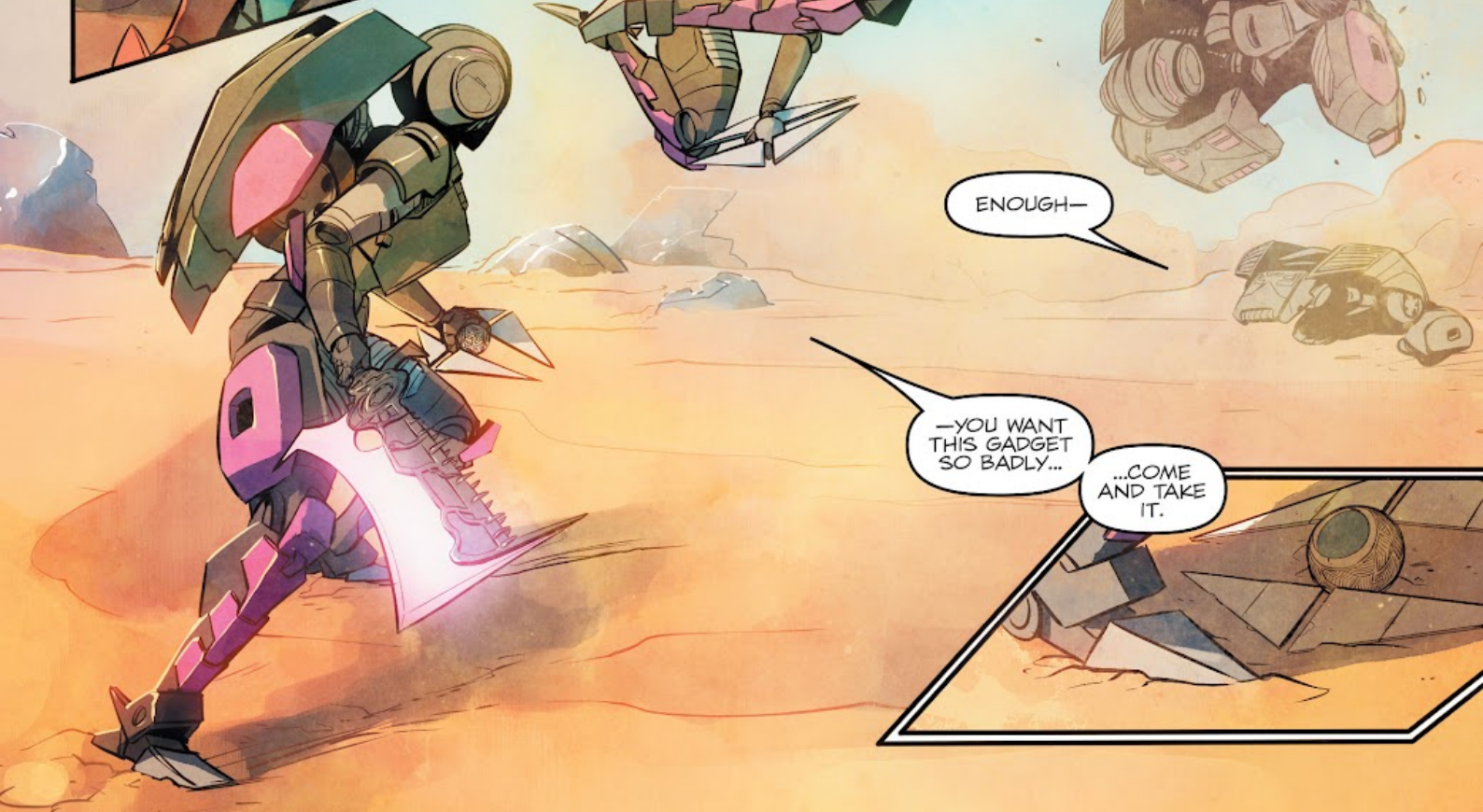
DON'T CALL  
ANYONE ELSE.  
I'M ON MY  
WAY!















GIVE US THE  
ENIGMA AND IT'S  
OVER, ARCEE!

OH, IS  
THAT  
ALL?

HERE I THOUGHT  
WE WERE JUST  
GETTING—  
**URK**—STARTED!

I WON'T  
ASK AGAIN—  
**URK!**

NO! YOU  
WON'T!

WE'RE  
TALKING NOW,  
AREN'T WE?

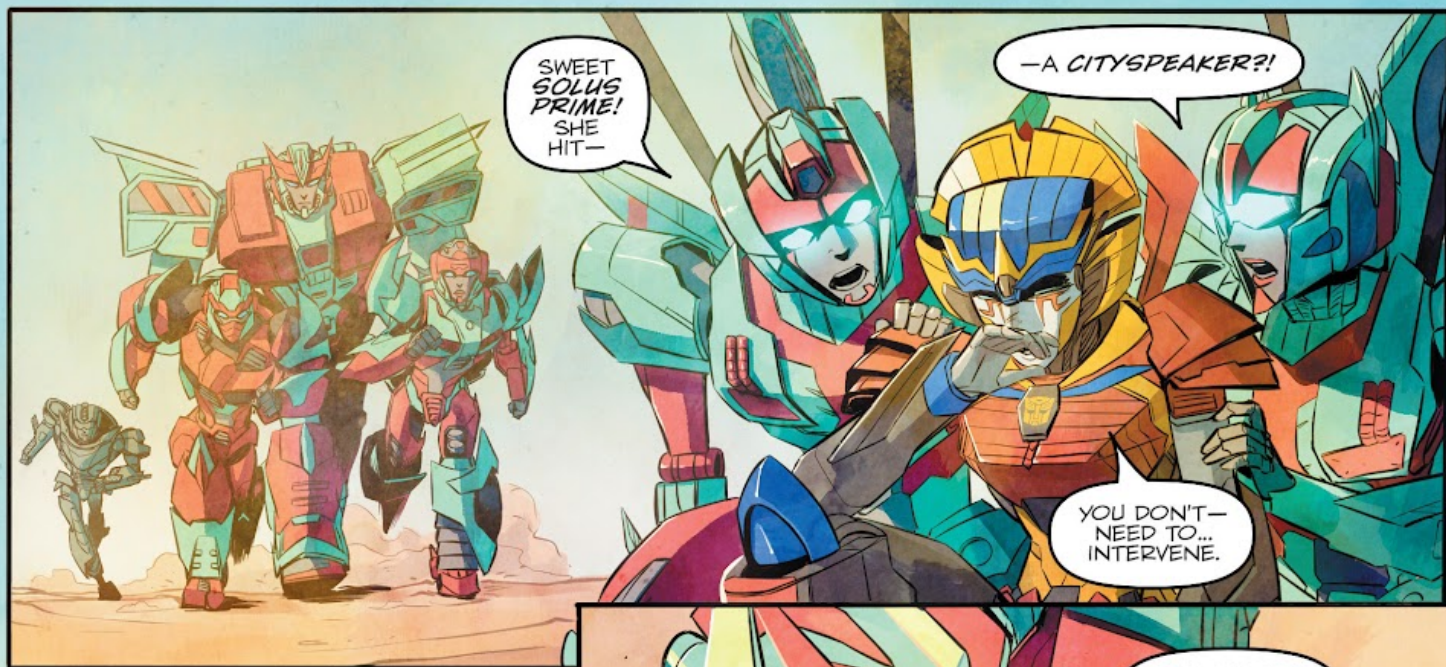
**GRAH!**

WHAT DO  
YOU HAVE  
TO SAY,  
CHROMIA?

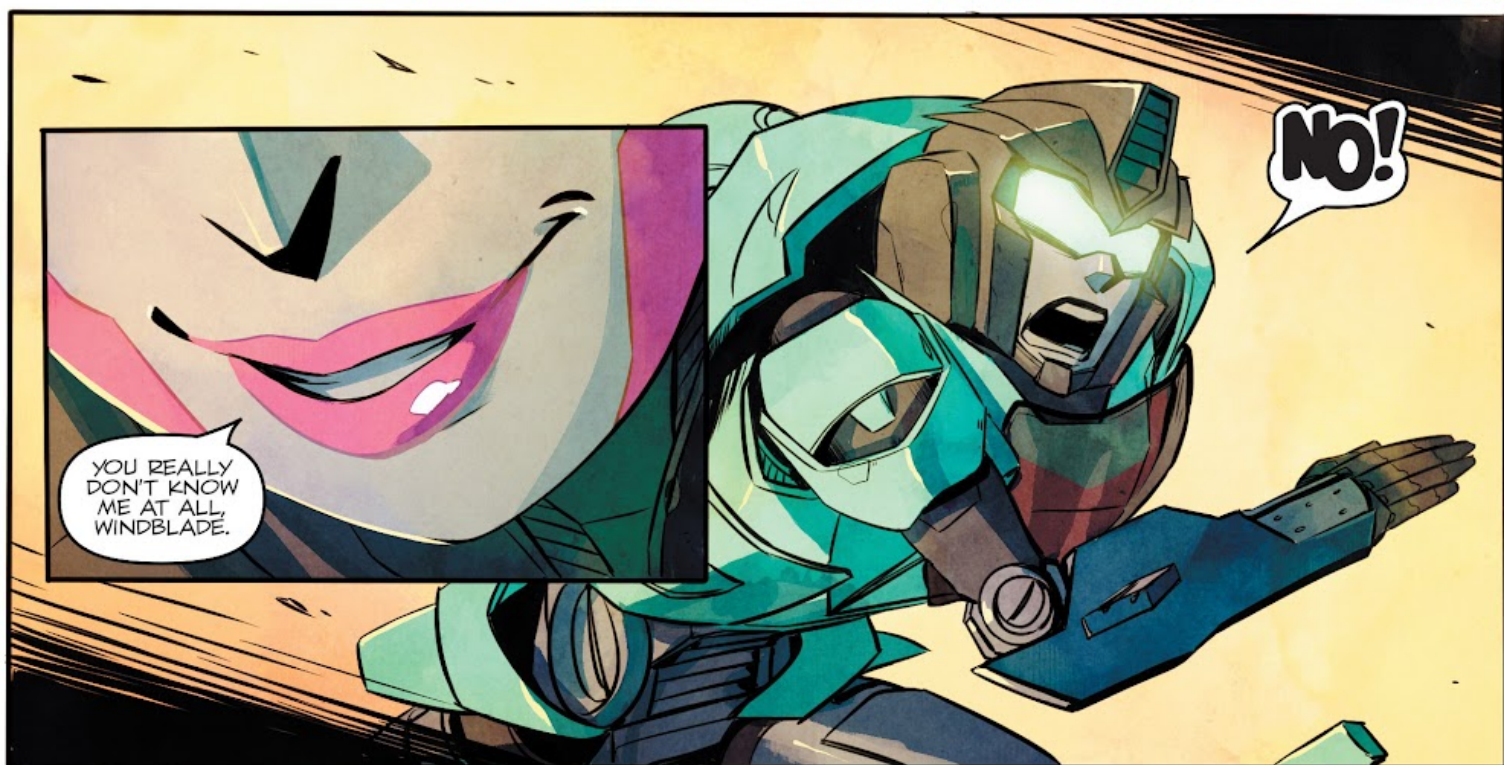
ARE YOU WILLING  
TO DIE FOR  
**STARSCREAM**,  
TOO?!

FOR THIS  
THING?!

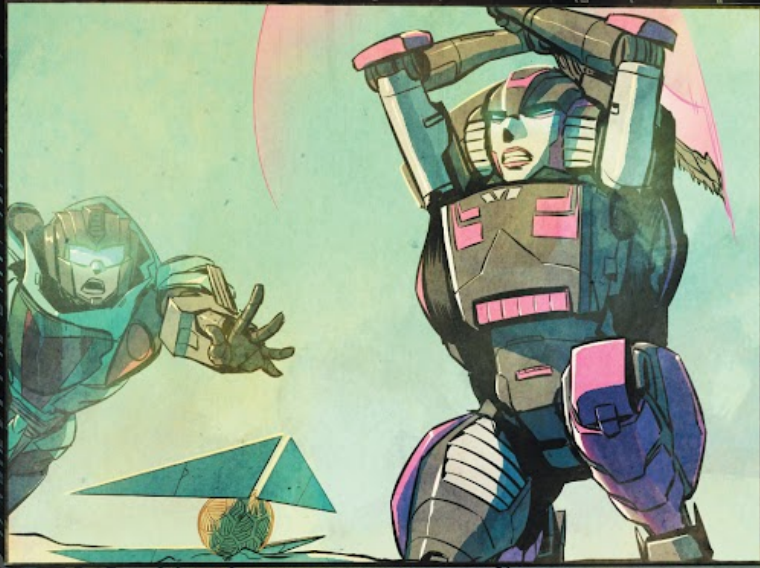
















WE—I—AM

**VICTORION!**

AND YOU WILL  
STEP BACK FROM  
THE ENIGMA, OR I  
WILL **BLAST** YOU  
TO **PIECES**.





STOP!

THIS IS  
EXACTLY WHAT  
I *DIDN'T* WANT  
TO HAPPEN!



HOW CAN  
YOU THREATEN  
SOMETHING AS  
SACRED AS THE  
TREASURE OF  
A PRIME?!

IT'S NOT  
SO HARD  
WHEN—  
ARGH!

OUF!  
I—I'VE GOT  
YOU.



FZZT

AHH!

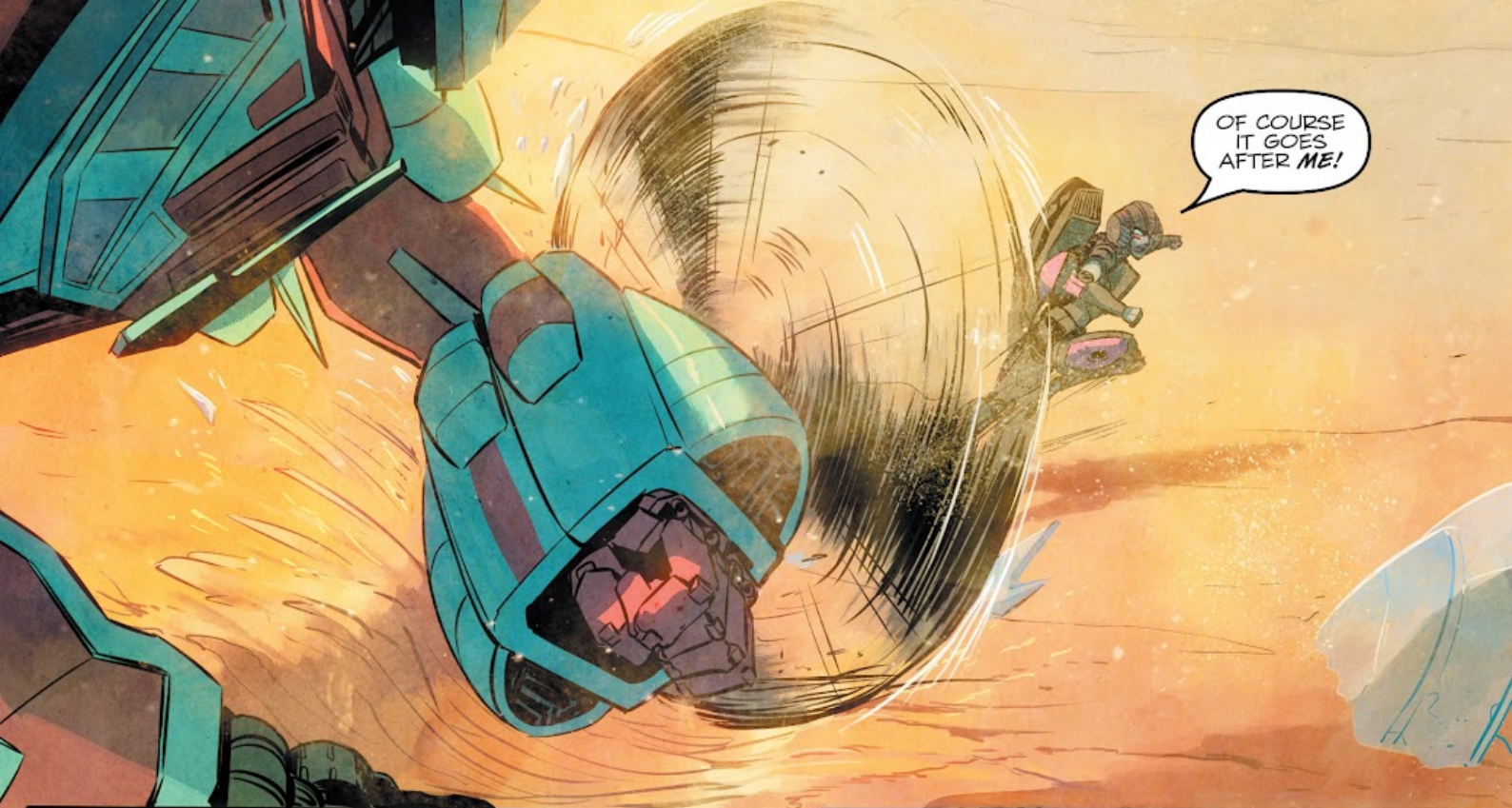




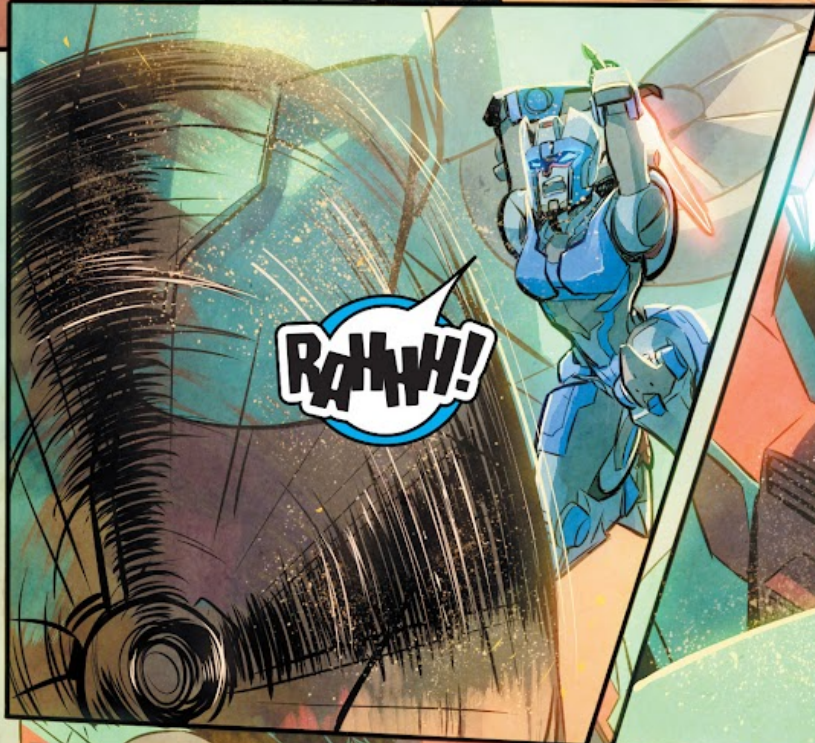








OF COURSE  
IT GOES  
AFTER *ME*!



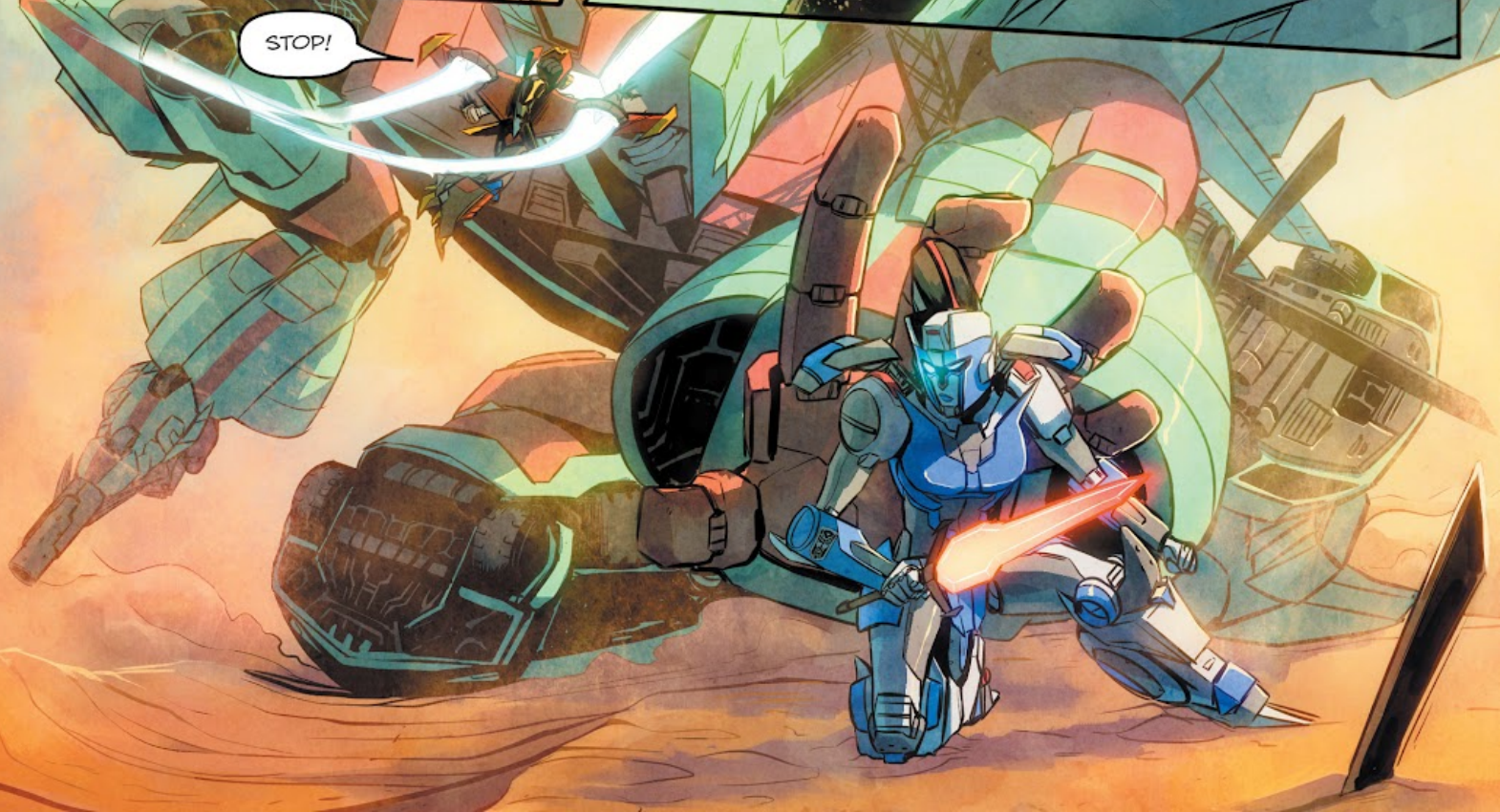
**RAHH!**



**GAH!**

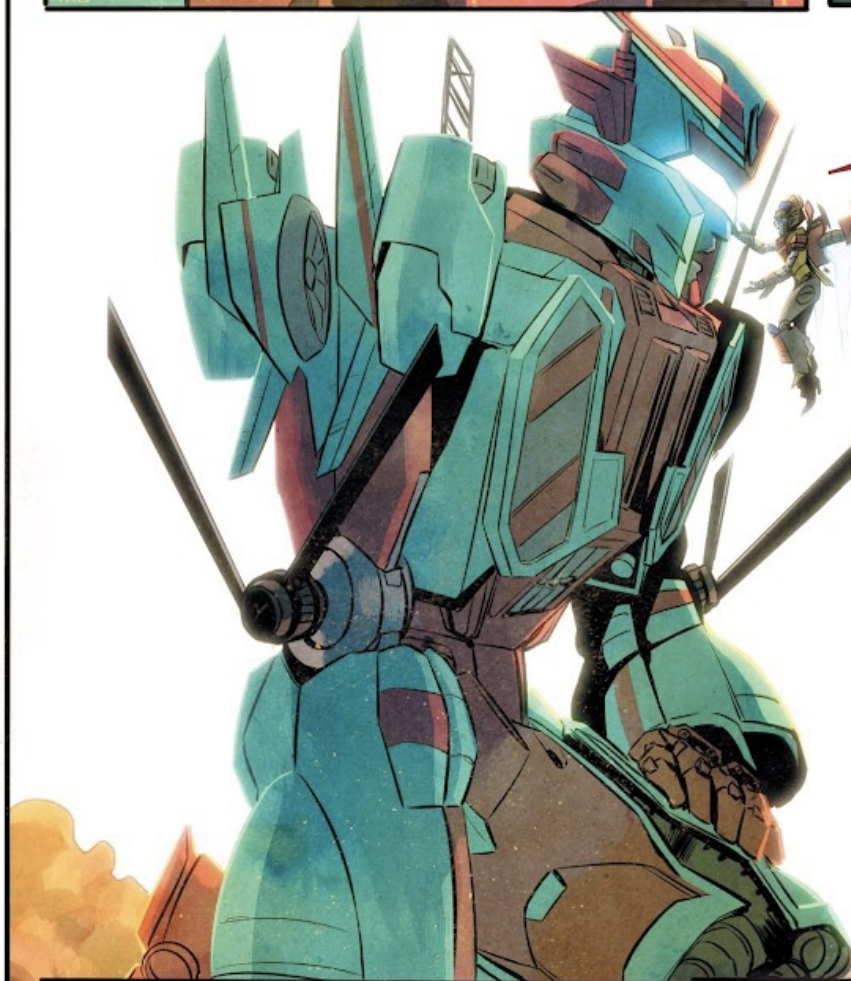
HERETICS  
AND DEFILERS  
MUST PAY  
FOR THEIR  
CRIMES!

**SHNK**

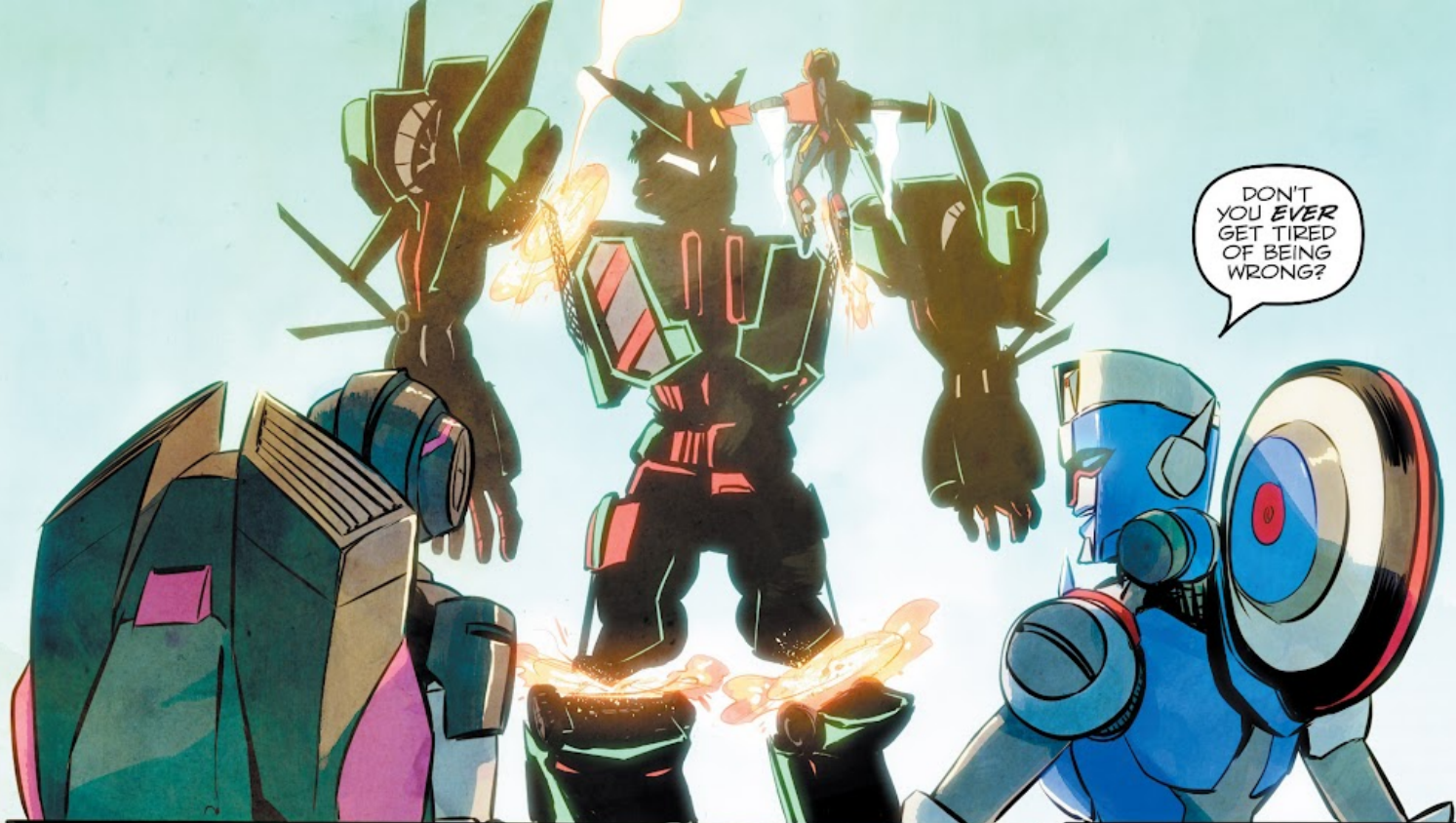


STOP!









DON'T YOU *EVER* GET TIRED OF BEING WRONG?



I'M SORRY, CITYSPEAKER. WE WERE DISORIENTED.

WE WERE MORE THAN THAT. WE WERE—

—UNIFIED. WELL, MORE SO.



I DIDN'T... I DIDN'T KNOW.

NOT NOW. NOT YET.



IT'S OVER, ARCEE. THE ENIGMA IS GOING BACK WHERE IT BELONGS AND WE *NEVER* SPEAK OF THIS INCIDENT AGAIN.

YOU TRUST THEM TO KEEP THIS SECRET?

I DO.

AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, I WANT TO TRUST YOU NOT TO COME BACK FOR IT.

WHY DO YOU FEEL SUCH A NEED TO *DESTROY* SOMETHING SO PRECIOUS?





HOW CAN YOU EVEN ASK THAT?!



YOU MUST REALIZE WHY WE HAVE TO STOP ANYONE ELSE FROM COMBINING. TO SAVE *THEM* FROM BECOMING ABOMINATIONS!

WE... ARE SORRY WE ATTACKED YOU, CYBERTRONIAN. THE CHANGE WAS... *JARRING* FOR US. BUT DO NOT CALL US AN ABOMINATION.

WE HAVE BEEN *CHANGED*. IT IS OUR DUTY NOW TO FIGURE OUT IF THAT CHANGE IS FOR GOOD OR ILL.



TRANSFORMERS ARE NOT MEANT TO BE *GESTALTS*. THEY ARE PERVERSIONS.



WHY? BECAUSE 'BOTS LIKE *GALVATRON* SAY THEY ARE?

WE'RE *ALL* PERVERSIONS TO HIM. NOT THE RIGHT SHAPE, NOT THE RIGHT ALT MODE, NOT WHATEVER HE THINKS OF AS PURE.

BUT, THE THING IS, I DON'T CARE WHAT GALVATRON THINKS OF ME. WHY DO YOU?

I DON'T. I...



I DON'T THINK 'BOTS SHOULD BE CHANGED AGAINST THEIR WILL.

NEITHER DO I.





NEITHER DO WE. BUT WE **ARE** CHANGED AND WE HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT TO BE WHAT WE **ARE** AS WHAT WE WERE.

AND IF STARScream STARTS FORCING PEOPLE TO COMBINE?

WE WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN.

PERHAPS IF THE ENIGMA WAS HIDDEN, KEPT SAFE ON CAMINUS...

NO.

STARScream AND GALVATRON, THEY WANT US TO STAY SEPARATE.

EXCLUSION IS THE FIRST STEP IN JUSTIFYING WAR.



THAT'S WHY THE ENIGMA HAS TO GO BACK. IT'S WHY WE HAVE TO **EMBRACE** STARScream AS TIGHTLY AS POSSIBLE. IF THERE ARE NO "ABOMINATIONS," THERE IS NOTHING TO GO TO WAR AGAINST.

AND EVERY DAY OF THIS **IMPERFECT PEACE** IS A DAY CYBERTRONIANS CLING TO PEACE A LITTLE TIGHTER.



HOW MANY OF THESE DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS ARE YOU WILLING TO BURY, WINDBLADE?

AS MANY AS I HAVE TO.



HNN. SO YOU'RE NOT THE PERFECT IDEALIST EVERYONE SAYS YOU ARE.

OKAY. I GUESS IF YOU'RE WILLING TO FIGHT A LITTLE DIRTY, I'M WILLING TO HAVE A LITTLE FAITH.



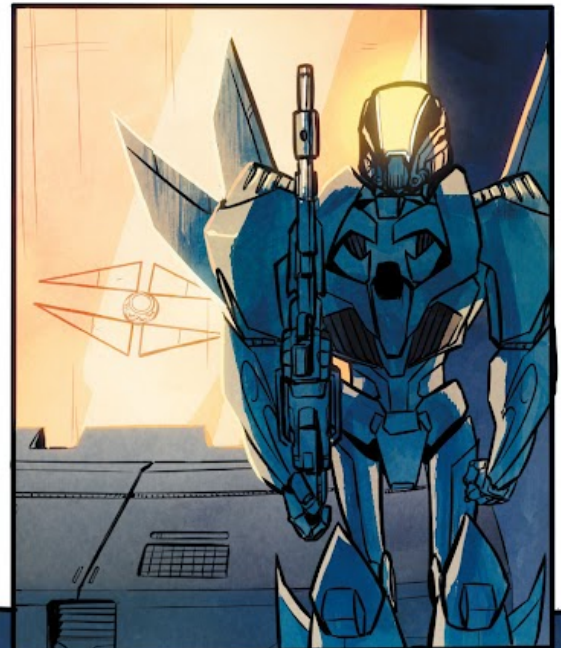
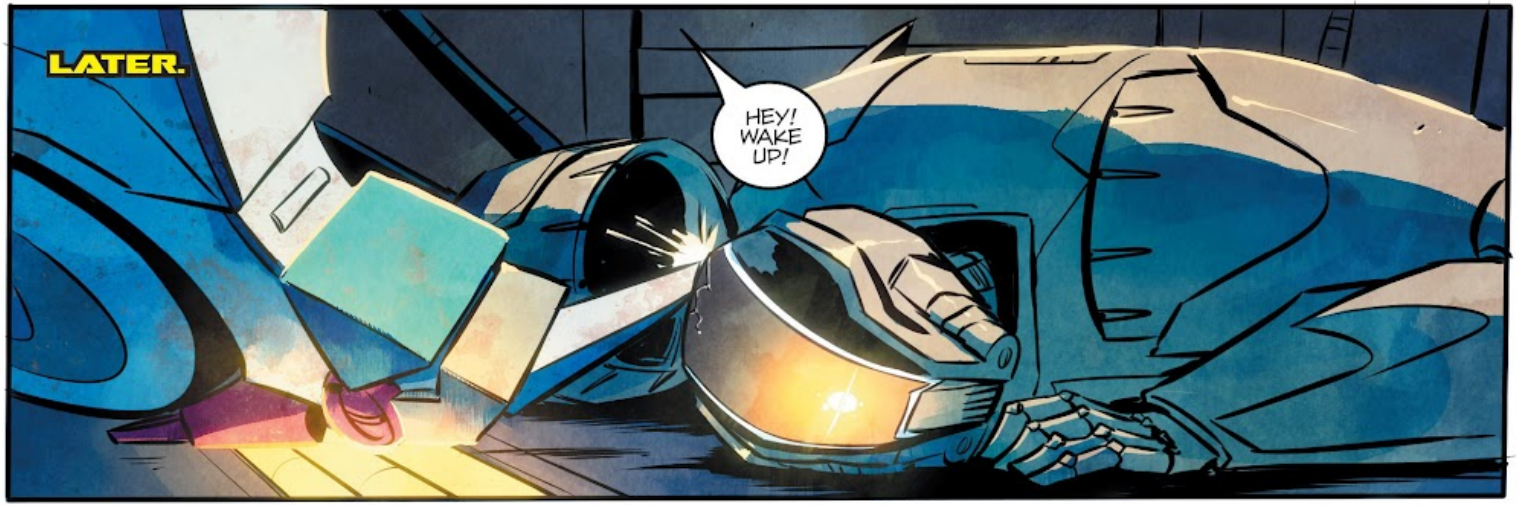
TAKE IT.

BUT IF STARScream DOES START TO BUILD HIS ARMY, I EXPECT YOU... ALL OF YOU... TO SNUFF OUT HIS SPARK.

...

GLADLY.







# COMBINER HUNTERS

Welcome to the TRANSFORMERS: COMBINER HUNTERS one-shot! I'm John Barber—I edit (or sometimes write) the TRANSFORMERS comics from IDW Publishing and Hasbro.

Hope you enjoyed this adventure, pitting Windblade, Chromia, and Arcee against the all-new Combiner, Victorion! There's a bit of a history to this comic book, as many of you may know.

A few years ago, Hasbro ran a promotion where fans could build a new TRANSFORMERS character by voting online for specific attributes. The result was Windblade, who made her debut in the comic book saga *Dark Cybertron*. The introduction of Windblade made huge waves among TRANSFORMERS—and comics—fans.

One of the big reasons for the instant excitement about Windblade was the fact she is a woman—and female TRANSFORMERS characters had been woefully underrepresented in the TRANSFORMERS comics. So Windblade ushered in a new era, bringing Chromia (plus another new character, Nautica) along with her, joining Arcee... with many, many more following quickly.

Another big reason for Windblade's rise to popularity in the comics was the quality and success of the first *Windblade* limited series, written by Mairghread Scott and drawn by Sarah Stone. Mairghread had been writing TRANSFORMERS cartoons for some time, and had come aboard to work on some comics, too. I knew she had a particular interest in female TRANSFORMERS, so she was the first person I reached out to, to write the story. Mairghread introduced me to Sarah, and her amazing art turned heads throughout the comics industry!

So, with Windblade a hit—making her way into toys, comics, and TV—Hasbro decided that for their next Fan-Built promotion, they'd have a whole Combiner—which, as I'm sure you've figured out (if you didn't already know), is a giant character built out of multiple regular-sized ones.

This time, the voting was more complex—more characters mean more variables—and in the end, Victorion stood tall!

But before the voting had even opened, Hasbro's Sarah Carroll reached out to me. Sarah—along with Michael Kelly, Hasbro's Senior Director, Global Publishing—is somebody I work with on a day-to-day basis, creating cool connection points between comics and toys. She asked if IDW would be interested in debuting the new Combiner in the comics—specifically, for Comic-Con International: San Diego.

We were in the midst of plotting out a story called *Combiner Wars*, which I was co-writing with Mairghread. We were already neck-deep in Combiners... so, of course we were interested! The added twist would be that these new characters would be introduced in a story highlighting the Combiner Hunters—a Comic-Con Exclusive toy set that included new decos of Windblade, Chromia, and Arcee.

I called up Mairghread to see if she was interested, and she immediately hit upon a story that provided a great jumping-on point for new readers, worked as an epilogue to *Combiner Wars*, and set up some important developments that will play out further in the *Transformers* comic I write.

At the previous year's Comic-Con, I met an artist named Sara Pitre-Durocher. She was working on TRANSFORMERS games and packaging art, and I'd been impressed with her portfolio, so I brought her on to do a few covers for *Combiner Wars*. With this new one-shot taking shape, I thought she'd be a good fit. I emailed her and learned just how right I was: she was already working on some of the packaging art for Victorion! As the pages started to come in, I knew we had something special here—Sara nailed the impressive action and quiet drama with equal skill.

Joining her on colors, thanks to Andrew Hall of Phase6, is a fantastic colorist who goes by Yamaishi. She'd helped us out on the end of *Combiner Wars* and lends a beautiful painterly touch to the Sea of Rust and all our heroes.

So that's how this comic came about. Now—what happens next?

Windblade and Chromia appear every month in *Transformers: Windblade*, written by Mairghread, drawn by Corin Howell, and colored by Thomas Deer. In the fallout from *Combiner Wars*, Cybertron has come into contact with several long-lost colonies—and Windblade is trying to get allies against Starscream, Cybertron's current ruler!

Victorion will next turn up in Arcee's regular home—*Transformers*, written by me and drawn by Andrew Griffith, with colors by Josh Perez (and some guest art by Sara in the not-too-distant future!). Arcee is on Earth, acting as leader of an Autobot team that's up against Galvatron's attempts to restart the Decepticon Empire!

And Nautica—Windblade and Chromia's absent friend—is aboard the starship *Lost Light* in *Transformers: More Than Meets the Eye*, by writer James Roberts, artist Alex Milne, and colorist Joana Lafuente. Rodimus and Megatron (who's an Autobot now) lead a quest to find the Knights of Cybertron, and along the way get into some of the most fan-and-critically-acclaimed stories in the history of TRANSFORMERS comics.

Plus! *Transformers Vs. G.I. Joe* pits two of the best brands in entertainment against each other in a way you'd never imagine, courtesy of the visionary writer-artist Tom Scioli (with me dragging him down a little); and *Transformers Robots in Disguise* debuts this month, featuring the stars of the hit Cartoon Network show going up against their former (?) friends from the fan-favorite *Transformers Prime* show in all-ages fun from writer Georgia Ball and artist Priscilla Tramontano!

All of these comic books are available at your local comic book store (use [comicshoplocator.com](http://comicshoplocator.com) to find one) or online using the new TRANSFORMERS comics app, available on iOS and Android devices—plus anywhere else comics and books are sold!

So—I've rambled long enough! See you in the funny pages!

John Barber  
Senior Editor